

LESSON 27

Faith, Hope, and Charity

Introduction

The attributes of faith, hope, and charity are necessary for all who wish to dwell in the presence of our Father in Heaven.

These attributes are gifts from God that come to those who seek after them by following the example of Jesus Christ.

Background Reading

- Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “The Infinite Power of Hope,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 21–24.
- Richard G. Scott, “The Transforming Power of Faith and Character,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 43–46.

Suggestions for Teaching

Ether 12:28; Moroni 10:18–21

Faith, hope, and charity are essential for salvation

Ask students to quickly name attributes they think are important to acquire while in mortality. Then ask them to identify which of those attributes they think are most vital in order to inherit the kingdom of God.

Remind students that as Moroni was concluding his work on the golden plates, he wrote some final words of exhortation to those who would one day read the record. As part of his counsel he highlighted three attributes that are essential to our salvation. Invite a student to read Moroni 10:18–21 aloud, and ask the class to identify these three attributes.

- Why do you think the characteristics of faith, hope, and charity are so essential to our salvation?

To help students answer this question, invite a student to read Ether 12:28 aloud, and ask the class to identify the doctrine taught in this verse.

- What doctrine is recorded in this verse? (Students should identify the following: **Developing faith, hope, and charity brings us to Jesus Christ.**)

Invite students to look for principles and doctrines throughout this lesson that can help them understand and develop these important attributes more fully.

Alma 32:26–29, 37–41; Moroni 7:21, 25–28, 33

Faith allows us to “lay hold upon every good thing”

Write *Increasing Our Faith in Jesus Christ* on the board.

Remind students that the prophet Alma used an analogy of a growing seed to teach the Zoramites how to develop faith in Jesus Christ. Invite a few students to take turns reading from Alma 32:26–29 aloud. Encourage students to identify phrases that describe what we can do to increase our faith.

Invite a few students to share a phrase they identified and explain what the phrase teaches about how we can increase our faith. As students identify phrases, you may wish to write them under the heading on the board. Phrases may include the following: *awake and arouse your faculties; experiment upon my words; desire to believe; give place, that a seed [the word] may be planted in your heart*. If needed, help students understand that the word *faculties* refers to our ability to think and act.

- In verse 29, why do you think Alma taught that our faith would not yet be perfect after performing this experiment?
- What more do you think is needed to perfect our faith?

Invite a few students to take turns reading from Alma 32:37–41, and ask the class to look for what we must do to develop the faith necessary to obtain eternal life.

- What principle did Alma teach in these verses about how we can continue to strengthen our faith? (Students should identify the following principle: **If we diligently nourish God’s word in our hearts, our faith in Jesus Christ will grow.** Write this truth on the board.)
- What do you think it means to diligently nourish the word? What are some consistent actions we can take to nourish God’s word and help faith grow deep in our hearts?

To help students understand how they can nourish God’s word, display the following statement by President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency, and invite a student to read it aloud as the class looks for keys to nourishing our faith:



“However much faith to obey God we now have, we will need to strengthen it continually and keep it refreshed constantly. We can do that by deciding now to be more quick to obey and more determined to endure. Learning to start early and to be steady are the keys to spiritual preparation. . . .

“ . . . We build the faith to pass the tests of obedience over time and through our daily choices. We can decide now to do quickly whatever God asks of us. And we can decide to be steady in the small tests of obedience which build the faith to carry us through the great tests, which will surely come” (“Spiritual Preparedness: Start Early and Be Steady,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2005, 38, 40).

- What did President Eyring say we must do to strengthen or nourish our faith?
- Why do you think that steady and daily obedience to God’s word is so vital in building our faith and trust in Him?

Invite a few students to share how following the principles taught by Alma has affected their faith in Jesus Christ.

Tell students that the prophet Mormon testified of the eternal importance of faith in Jesus Christ. Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Mormon’s testimony in Moroni 7:21, 25–28, 33 as the class ponders what they can do to increase their faith in the Lord and “lay hold upon” the blessings Mormon identifies.

Ether 12:4, 8–9; Moroni 7:40–42*Hope is an anchor to the soul*

Invite a student to read Ether 12:8–9 aloud and another to read Moroni 7:40–42 aloud. Ask students to identify the attribute that we can attain as we develop faith.

- According to these passages, what attribute comes because of our faith?

Read the following two statements, and ask students to identify the differences between them: (1) I hope it doesn't rain today. (2) I have hope that if I repent, I will be forgiven through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

- How are these expressions of hope different? (The first is an uncertain wish for something beyond one's control, and the second is an expression of confidence that motivates action.)

To help students understand the scriptural meaning of hope, invite a student to read the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency:



"Hope is ... the abiding trust that the Lord will fulfill His promise to us. It is confidence that if we live according to God's laws and the words of His prophets now, we will receive desired blessings in the future. It is believing and expecting that our prayers will be answered. It is manifest in confidence, optimism, enthusiasm, and patient perseverance" ("The Infinite Power of Hope," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 22).

Invite students to silently read Moroni 7:41 and look for what we will have hope for as we develop faith in Christ.

- What principle did Mormon teach concerning hope in the verse? (Students should identify the following: **As we develop faith in Jesus Christ, we obtain hope that through His Atonement we can be raised to eternal life.**)
- Why do you think faith in Jesus Christ and hope are so closely related?

Invite a student to read aloud Ether 12:4, and have the class look for how Moroni described hope.

- What does Mormon's use of an anchor teach us about hope? How could a person lacking faith be like a boat without an anchor?

Invite a few students to testify of the hope that has come into their lives because of faith in Jesus Christ.

Ether 12:33–34; Moroni 7:43–48*Charity is the pure love of Christ*

Invite a student to read aloud Moroni 7:43–44, and ask students to identify what attribute Mormon declared we must develop once we have faith and hope.

Display the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994), and invite a student to read it aloud:



“If we would truly seek to be more like our Savior and Master, then learning to love as He loves should be our highest goal. Mormon called charity ‘the greatest of all’ (Moro. 7:46)” (“Godly Characteristics of the Master,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 47).

To clarify why charity is such an important attribute to seek, invite a few students to take turns reading from Moroni 7:45–47 aloud. Point out that these verses help us understand charity by listing what charity is and what it is not.

- What words and phrases in these verses communicate the importance of charity?
- What thoughts or insights can you share about the characteristics of charity listed in verse 45?

Invite a student to read Moroni 7:48 aloud.

- What did Mormon counsel us to do as we seek the gift of charity? (Help students identify the following principle: **If we pray with energy of heart and follow Jesus Christ, we can be filled with charity.**)
- How does seeking for the gift of charity help us to become better followers of Jesus Christ?

Invite a student to read Ether 12:33–34 aloud while the class looks for the relationship between charity and the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

- What is the relationship between charity and the Atonement?

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“The greater definition of ‘the pure love of Christ’ ... is not what we as Christians try but largely fail to demonstrate toward others but rather what Christ totally succeeded in demonstrating toward us. *True* charity has been known only once. It is shown perfectly and purely in Christ’s unfailing, ultimate, and atoning love for us. ... It is Christ’s love for us that ‘beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.’ It is as demonstrated in Christ that ‘charity never faileth.’ It is that charity—his pure love for us—without which we would be nothing, hopeless, of all men and women most miserable. Truly, those found possessed of the blessings of his love at the last day—the Atonement, the Resurrection, eternal life, eternal promise—surely it shall be well with them” (*Christ and the New Covenant* [1997], 336).

- How does Elder Holland help you to understand why “charity never faileth” and why it is the “greatest” of the spiritual gifts?
- What might you do to share with others the pure love of Jesus Christ that He has so freely imparted to you?

Ask students to review Moroni 7:45 and then set a goal to pray and work to more fully develop one characteristic of charity. Testify of the divine help you have received as you have worked to develop charity yourself.

Student Readings

- Alma 32:26–29, 37–41; Ether 12:4, 8–9, 28, 33–34; Moroni 7:21, 25–28, 33, 40–48; 10:18–21.
- Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “The Infinite Power of Hope,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 21–24.